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FLORAL DECORATION

By

GERTRUDE M. WHITE.

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THESIS

FLORICULTURE 8

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The love of flowers does not belong to the cultured races alone. Savage and semi-civilized tribes have always used them for personal adornment and as tokens of love, regarding them as symbols of meaning. Roman history probably records the first use of cultivated flowers in wreaths and garlands as well as the most lavish use of them the world has known when they were strewn in halls and through the streets on festal occasions. In our own country the love of flowers existed before us among the Indians, but it has come to us through our New England ancestors who brought their flowers and their love for them with them when they came to this country, as their old fashioned gardens of which we read give plenty of evidence. Wherever flowers and a love for them exist, probably some form of floral decoration is found, but ^{undoubtedly} ~~probably~~ nothing like floral decoration as we understand ^{it} ~~was~~ general in those old New England days. It is difficult to know just when it did begin - material at hand upon the subject takes us back to 1885 at which time floral decoration seems to be a well established "fashion". The First greenhouse was probably built in America in New York in 1764, but there were few greenhouses until after 1850. Just the connection between greenhouses and floral decoration is conjectural, but two factors point to a probable connection - first, it is largely greenhouse flowers that are used in the work, and, second, it seems probable that floral decoration, as such, developed from the desire of the people to have flowers about them in seasons when they could not enjoy them out of doors. This, of course, was impossible until the greenhouse put flowers within reach of the people at all times of the year. The forms of present day floral decoration are many and varied, ^{and} ~~but~~ too familiar to every one to require enumeration.

Floral decoration, like other things, has passed through varying phases of development. In certain stages ^{especially} ~~probably~~ in earlier ~~case~~ when hothouse flowers were newer and more of a novelty than at the present time, there were fashions in flowers as well as in clothes. A column was devoted each month in the floral magazine to "Floral Styles" and one turns there to find whether cypripediums or violets should form the table decorations and what flower milady should send in her boutonniere gift - for at one time large boutonnieres costing two or three dollars were especially fashionable gifts for a lady to make to a gentleman. These columns read not unlike fashion papers and the changes in floral fashions are quite as interesting and amusing as those in clothes. One winter (1887) there is a run on yellow, every decoration must be of yellow - of daffodils if possible - not to have yellow is to be decidedly out of fashion. The next year yellow is "out", it has had its season and is gone and every decoration must be pink. In February the French fish basket is the most popular German favor, in June it is the Marie Antoinette basket, and in December the "dude's collar basket", a high-handled low basket turned back after the manner of the extremely stylish men's collars. At this time green hand bouquets especially of mignonette and cypripediums are extremely fashionable for opera and teas and nothing is as choice as cypripediums for table decorations. Corsages are small, of one or two roses only, boutonnieres large, the choicest ~~being one~~ of Roman Hyacinths with a center of violets, and bridal bouquets are huge ^{with} as many as six hundred sprays of lily-of-the-valley ~~being used~~ while one hundred roses make up the bridesmaid's bouquet. German favors are largely of flowers made up into dainty fichus, sashes, scarfs, violet balls which hang on the arm, and fans decorated

with flowers. Fresh flowers are used extensively on evening gowns catching up drapery, in the place of trimming, and even forming entire portions of the gown. Wedding gowns may have the entire train or front panel of flowers of any description from violets and lily-of-the-valley to tulips, ~~or flowers may be used instead of pearl passementerie.~~

Bridesmaids' hats are trimmed with fresh flowers, while the extreme use of flowers for costumes is in a flower girl costume for a fancy dress ball composed entirely of flowers. This is the dainty and attractive side, but there flourished ^{with} ~~alongside of~~ it so much that was stiff and formal and ugly that one wonders how the mind that could enjoy the one could ^{tolerate} ~~appreciate~~ the other. Floral rugs of pansies, tulips, roses, etc. are hung over walls and bannisters or spread upon the floor, and the prize cup design at the New York flower show is a table decoration with a cover made entirely of pansies and a large, and tall vase covered with pansies and filled with flowers! And a new "elegant design" of a wedding veil canopy is created with a high panel with Gothic top of roses and maidenhair, projecting from which like a bracket is a tiara or crown of orange blossoms with a flowing veil worked out with orange blossoms, lily-of-the-valley, and bouvardia in lace pattern. And of the stiffness and ugliness of funeral designs there have been too many relics in recent years for any one to need description. We find so much of the stiff and conventional with flowers of all kinds combined with little regard for color harmony or beauty of effect that it is a surprise to read (in 1889) that "one cannot fail to observe the great care given to detail, the harmony in color, in the kind of flowers and foliage used in the selection of greenery associated with heavy or light blossoms. It is not long

ago when geraniums, smilax and most any green leaves would be bunched with flowers whatever their character - and also of the attempt to make bouquets more loose and natural." This ideal of floral art was evidently seen by the appreciative few, who, ~~at~~ length after years of work and striving for this end, have persuaded people of its greater beauty. When people began to get away from these stiff designs, the love of a great quantity of material remained and designs while slightly less stiff were massive and almost oppressive. A huge canopy of American Beauty roses covering an assemblage of some fifteen persons seated at dinner is less stiff than the pansy table cover, but it is far from artistic and is really a burdensome thing.

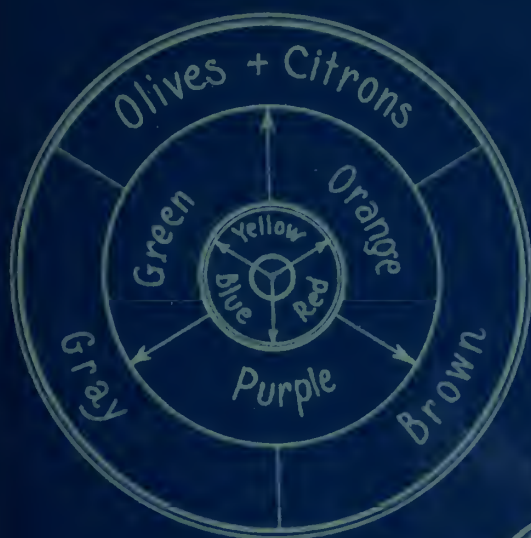
American floral decoration has been and still is to a considerable extent expressive of certain characteristics or attitudes of American life, and is influenced by some of the same forces that influence other things. Everywhere in the material world we have been surrounded with quantities of new things, ^{and} while the horticultural world has not lagged far behind - the skill of the hybridizer and gardener have created a wealth of material of all colors, sizes and descriptions, such as were never known before so that the materials at our disposal are almost limitless. Surrounded with such quantities we have come to place more value upon the ^{mass} quantity than upon the beautiful, and eager to ^{use} ~~try~~ all our playthings we have tried every possible combination to see what we could do, flinging all canons of art and taste to the winds. And the result? The more we had the more we wanted and, in our feverish excitement and desire to create ever more and new combinations, we have made every effort to force flowers and shrubs into bloom at the earliest possible date, and have gone to the far regions of the world to call some new flower that is different - anything so long as it is

different. Consequently we have valued decorations too often for the quantity of material they displayed and for the boldness and oddness of the material or combination rather than for its beauty. Perhaps much of this sort of decoration may be likened to the gew-gaw, ginger-bread kind of architecture which followed the introduction of machinery.*

Just as every kind of wooden contrivance which the machine was capable of turning out was applied as ornament to buildings byway of seeing what could be done, so the array of flowers has been put together in every conceivable manner to see what new things could be contrived. But as we outgrew that architecture and regained our sense of the beautiful we shall in time outgrow this confused and complex floral art and find that the simpler arrangements and combinations are more beautiful and more satisfying. That time is dawning now, and present day floral work is infinitely more natural, simple, and beautiful than ever before. It is still in a stage of development in which it must discard those things which stand out as its glaring ^{defects} ~~faults~~ before it can ever become an art.

Floral decoration at its best is an art - "it is a picture in which living line and living color form the artist's medium, and as such it is entitled to the same sort of consideration that the artist gives when he creates other pictures." Now the final test of any art is that of beauty and its supreme test that of full beauty to which nothing can be added and nothing taken away to improve the effect. How many floral decorations can withstand that test? How many works of any art can withstand it? Perhaps as many of one as of the other. But this must remain the ideal, which, the seldom attained, must be striven for, and in the pursuit of which we may find much beauty and enjoyment on the way.

The first problem which confronts the decorator is that of color. The ~~most~~ striking feature of most flowers and ~~probably that~~ ~~one~~ which most arouses our admiration is color. And since in handling flowers we are dealing with color to a greater extent than ~~is true~~ in any other art, it is ~~very~~ obvious that a knowledge or understanding of color is of the greatest importance. What to me harmony is to the musician color harmony is to the floral artist and ~~equally so subject to rules which may speedily be broken.~~ Scientists arrange the colors by matching them up to certain arbitrarily numbered lines upon the spectrum which represent the wave lengths of the ^{hues.} ~~respective lines.~~ For our practical purposes this is of little ~~use~~ ^{value.} for simple colors in flowers are few - few of them are on the ^{Spectrum} ~~line~~ and the colors ascribed to them are largely determined by consensus of opinion, the inaccuracy of which leads to considerable confusion. The simple colors - red, orange, yellow, blue, purple and green, - may be arranged in a circle or ^{they may be} ~~separated~~ ^{hues} by intermediate ~~lines~~, three between each color. In the first arrangement the colors lying opposite each other harmonize by contrast - they are complementary colors, each possessing all the elements of color the other lacks, so that if combined the result ^{will be} ~~is~~ white rather than a color. In the second arrangement there is a rainbow effect illustrating the principles of color harmony and discord. Any four or five colors lying side by side harmonize by analogy - there is a common element present binding them together - but skip five and try a combination of one and six. The result is a discord because the common element is not present; the harmony is broken and is not again restored until we pass far enough around the circle to reach the complementary or contrasting color. In the same way colors lying near each other on



COLOR



CHARTS

With Black

Clear Color

With White

Old Gold	Yellow	Sulphur
Ochre	Gold Yellow	Straw Yellow
Burnt Orange	Orange	Salmon
Terra-Cotta	Scarlet	Shrimp Pink
Cardinal	Red	Pink
Maroon	Crimson	Crimson Pink
Plum	Magenta	Purple Lilac
Dark Plum	Purple	Lilac
Logwood Violet	Violet	Blue Lilac.
Indigo	Ultramarine	Violet Blue

the spectrum harmonize by analogy while those at a distance are inharmonious.

The practical application of these rules requires some modification, for often the intensity of certain colors prevents their blending with any ^{other} color though the color chart ^{indicates that they} ~~would say it should~~ do so. Blue and orange are not always pleasing because the orange is so vivid that to be used satisfactorily it must have a colorless environment - but reduce one or both of these colors to a tint and the result will be quite different - the trouble is with the brilliancy of the tone rather than with the color itself. (In speaking of tints and shades of a color, "tint" means a color to which white has been added making it lighter, and "shade" a color to which black has been added making it darker). Analogous colors may for the same reason sometimes be offensive. This is more often the case when the deep shades like red and purple are forced into combination. But so soon as white is introduced into these colors they become more pleasing, and the more white, or in other words the lighter the tint, the more satisfactorily do colors combine which used in deeper hues are continually warring against each other. White has been found so universally to serve as a softener that it has been called the peacemaker among ~~the~~ flowers. If one imagines a bouquet of red, purple, orange and blue, and the same bouquet of light pink, blue, violet and yellow, the part it plays is quite evident.

While colors in flowers are not simple, the majority of them are probably simpler than those of the gowns and furnishings with which floral decorations are associated. Then ^{for} the understanding of the relation^s of colors in ^{Combination} ~~making other~~ colors and the effects upon

colors of the introduction of black and white become even more necessary, ~~and accordingly~~ (charts illustrating some of these ~~things~~ ^{facts} are attached.) Unless the designer is familiar with ^{these matters} ~~such things~~ he must spend much valuable time in experimenting before he can attack his problem directly. He must also train his eye to see colors as they really exist and as ~~present~~ hues are so complex this requires study and training.

A few general remarks should be added in regard to the use of color. All colors are harmonized by gray, ~~and~~ white and neutral tones, green is an invaluable mediator, easy transitions of color are more restful than contrasts, combinations of tints are generally more pleasing than combinations of shades, similar colors are generally more satisfactory than complementary - and then all the rules are told. They are really guiding principles rather than rules to be applied ^{or} ~~when they~~ ~~may~~ ~~and~~ discarded when necessary, for the decorator will soon find exceptions in abundance. Red and yellow and red and blue, both in-harmonious combinations are separated by the same number of spaces in the color wheel, yet no color wheel or ^{chart} ~~color scale~~ tells why pink and blue whatever their tints are more pleasing than pink and yellow. And no rule will tell him just which tint of red (or pink) will combine well with a given shade of red nor when shades of red and purple may clash or be harmonious. There are no hard and fast rules and the individual's artistic sense must serve him as final judge and critic. ^{also.} He must ^{also} study the effect of artificial light upon colors ~~also~~ for while it weakens some, it intensifies others and changes yet others so as to bringing out certain shades that were subdued in daylight. Mr. Felton would add that a very true guide in color combination is one's first impression - "if doubt is felt about any combination, it is best to

give it up, as one's first impressions are invariably the most reliable." But it seems as if the wisdom of following such advice would depend somewhat upon the type of mind of the individual. To the florist or decorator starting upon a study of floral decoration, the learning of the color language may seem to be as fraught with rules and exceptions as any tongue language ~~he~~ ever attempted, but after some experience and study, if he have artistic feeling for his work, it will become familiar and easy. The whole field is left open to him who can see and feel color and beauty, offering him unlimited combinations and opportunity for creative work and enjoyment.

This matter of color upon which so much stress has been laid is of peculiar importance just now. We are living in the midst of a color revival which in its brilliancy and gaiety rivals that of the 15th and 16th centuries. Instead of its being fashionable to ignore color we demand it in all our life from our automobiles to our paintings. "The terrible period of so-called high art with its sickly colors and stillmore sickly worshippers has happily passed from us." Some one, Mr. Schuyler Matthews I think, thinks much of this return to what he calls polychromatic instead of monochromatic art is due to the influence of brilliant flower colorings. If this be true it prompts one to ask where the flowers have been in the intervening centuries - did the people whilst living among them lose a fondness for them which they are but now regaining? But to whatever cause it may be attributed, color certainly is a much more dominating feature in our lives than it was ten years ago. This being true greater opportunities are offered the artist ^{he is surrounded also by} but more pitfalls ~~as~~ ^{well}, as one realizes when one sees some of the atrocious combinations ^{of the present day} ~~that are about us~~. And when one surveys the galaxy of colors of the horticultural world which are ~~the~~ creations of the hybridi-

zer's skill one realizes that something more than a haphazard use of whatever we may lay our hands upon is a fundamental necessity for ~~any~~ successful work in floral arrangement. It is even more true for the decorator than the landscape artist for in the outdoors the quantities of green, the greater distance and the atmosphere are ever-present and valuable mediators, whereas in floral decoration all of these aids are lacking.

Combinations are so innumerable that it is folly to suggest more than a few, but after such a lengthened discussion of color it seems almost necessary to cite a few good combinations:

Lavendar rhododendrons and white lilac

English ivy and snowdrops (contrast harmony)

American Beauty Rose and lilacs " "

Cecile Brunner roses and violets " "

Mrs. Ward roses and cypripediums (analogous harmony)

" " " " yellow snapdragons " "

Chrysanthemums and autumn foliage " "

Myosotis and yellow tulips (contrast harmony)

Lavendar and purple asters (dominant harmony)

Pink and lavendar sweet peas " "

Pink and blue hyacinths " "

Floral Decoration has been spoken of as an art and as such is based upon the ~~same~~ general principles of any art - namely, unity, design, propriety and purpose. Of these unity is probably the most important and the one, therefore, to which the artist must give considerable thought. It demands that the various parts of a composition bear some relation to each other, that something must

bind them together so that "out of many parts there shall be one whole." When the parts are too many and varied it is difficult to find any common element which ~~seems to bind~~ the whole together and unity is consequently lacking. Complexity and unity are incompatible and unless some parts are sacrificed making the composition more simple, unity will ~~never~~ be gained. Simplicity is ~~a fundamental necessity~~ for the securing of unity. The scheme may be simplified by reducing the quantity of material which in itself is sufficient sometimes to destroy the ^{complex} effect, or by reducing the kinds of flowers ^{or} used ~~and~~ the number of colors. Combinations of two kinds of flowers are always simple and pleasing - they may be of different tones of the same color, of different but harmonious colors, or of different but contrasting colors. ^{used} Combinations of contrasting colors may be extremely effective, but to ^{make them} ~~be~~ so requires some study and thought, for the contrast must be great enough to have character at the same time that it is not too prominent. It must always be used sparingly, the weaker colored flowers predominating while the vivid, contrasting flowers are few in number. If the numbers of the contrasting flowers are increased, the effectiveness of the result is not only lessened but discord may be set up because of the very intensity of the color. When darker colors are used contrast may be secured by the use of white but the same general rule as to the quantity holds.

In general, in all combinations of color one color should dominate while the others are subordinate - it helps to secure unity; ~~and is much more effective~~; it makes a certain theme or motif, and it lends character. In a large decoration this ^{dominant} color should be repeated in masses at intervals rather than ~~be~~ used in one larger mass.

^{idea of a}
This dominant color is very effective in what is called a dominant harmony - in which several tones of the same color are combined, one shading into another. The flowers in a single family are likely to show one color predominating and can usually be combined effectively in this way - e.g. lilac predominates among the hyacinths and orange among the nasturtiums, and ^{groups} ~~bunches~~ of ~~various~~ varieties in these families are seldom displeasing.

The simplest of all harmonies and one which is becoming increasingly popular is the use of one color only - of course it is possible to combine two flowers of the same color but usually the limitation to one color carries with it the limitation to one flower. It is peculiarly artistic for reasons which will be more apparent later, and ~~it~~ is destined to be used more and more. In landscape gardening this principle ^{of} ~~is termed~~ "monotony" and ~~it~~ is used a great deal for simplifying and unifying. It can be overdone and when this happens the whole scheme is as uninteresting as anything which we usually call monotonous - even as this paper itself. If unity is secured only by the sacrifice of interest it cannot be a success and the extreme on the one hand of excessive monotony and on the other of too much variety must be avoided. That middle course - the problem of securing both unity and variety - remains the problem of all the arts.

While harmony of color and unity are of prime importance, they are not the only guiding principles for attaining that full beauty to which nothing can be added and nothing taken away to improve the effect. Ruskin says "there are all kinds of harmonies in a picture" and so in flower pictures there is not only harmony of color, but harmony of

form and growth, and, we might add, harmony of season. In too many floral arrangements flowers are massed and combined in such a way that the beauty of the individual flower is lost. A great deal of the value of an arrangement should come from the form of the flowers but when they are massed and combined with too many other things it is impossible. We ~~used to~~^{should} learn to appreciate plants in the manner of the Japanese who value not a portion ~~of the plant~~ but the entire plant. 'Whereas the western amateur devotes his attention mainly to the blossoms, the Japanese lover of flowers bestows his admiration on the whole character of the plant or tree producing them. The rugged nature of the plum trunk, with its stiff, straight shoots, or the graceful sweep of the branches of the weeping cherry are to him inseparably associated with any beauty which the blossoms themselves possess. The lines of branch and stem, the form and surfaces of leaves, and the distribution of buds and blossoms, all receive their full share of attention. The loveliest buds and blossoms torn from their stems and crushed together in a mass, with ferns or other greenery between them convey to the Japanese mind no idea of floral art or beauty.' We have much to learn from them about the appreciation of Nature - probably much of our failure to observe these less obvious beauties can be laid at the door of Rush and Speed which permit only a superficial attitude toward so many things, for while we are tearing^{about} ~~around~~^{only} ~~only~~ those striking things which ~~can~~^{was to enjoy} rise up and smite us in the face can make an impression. And because form is not thus striking save in a few instances we have passed it by, so much the losers for never having found how much there ~~is there~~. Flowers are of greatly varying forms, some of which will combine no more harmoniously

than will certain colors. Similarity and contrast form guiding principles, but it is difficult to say just what degrees of each shall be present - one's artistic sense must feel it. In general regularity and irregularity are not reconcilable and any attempt to combine such flowers as calendulas and sweet peas or carnations and sweet peas must fail, the one being regular, the other irregular in all its parts. Both violets and lily of the valley are irregular in all their parts and everyone knows how well they combine. Double and single flowers do not usually go together well. And the question of size^{also} has its influence also.

Somewhat dependent upon form, color and growth, and yet infused through them is the subtle spiritual appeal of the flower - flowers are ~~all~~ as different as people and each has its own personality - it is an individuality which we can feel but not describe. There are flower aristocrats, ~~and~~ flower middlemen and flower plebeians and no power can make the aristocrats mingle sympathetically with any of the others, ~~classes~~. Roses, orchids, Easter lilies, rhododendrons, and lily-of-the-valley are aristocrats whatever their environment, and they are at their best only among those of their own class; - nor are carnations, asters, marigolds, etc., living companions of the orchids and roses.

~~It is this same spiritual harmony that is the essence of the matter of harmony of season.~~

For this reason some people say flowers should never be combined - that in every arrangement one kind of flower only should be used for only ~~when~~ by itself and free from associations ^{with} ~~of~~ other forms can the ~~real~~ individuality of the flower be preserved. To many this point of view will seem extreme, while ~~many~~ others would not

agree with it at all - probably it is not necessary to go so far as to say flowers should never be combined, but it is doubtless true that the more one loves flowers or trees, the more one comes to love the form and subtle charm of the entire growth, and ~~the more one~~ dislikes any arrangement which tends to destroy the plant's individuality. We are coming to realize its existence and importance more than formerly, and we must think of it much more yet if floral decorations are to be truly artistic. For those arrangements which seek primarily to preserve the individuality of the flowers are without doubt the most artistic - it is to a considerable extent one of the secrets of the Japanese flower arrangements, for while their stems are sometimes bent to form ~~certain~~ lines ~~full~~ of symbolic meaning, in every case the effect must be that of a living, growing plant or the result is a failure. And the more we make this our aim, the more we shall come to use a few flowers rather than many - for it is only in this way that the Japanese are able to secure their effects. But we shall thoroughly enjoy these arrangements of a few flowers only when we appreciate, more than color, size and quantity, and love equally well, the form and entire habit of growth.

This appreciation can come only through a close^f observance of Nature - ^{which} ~~this~~ demands more time than we have been willing to give ~~this~~ ^{also}. ~~we have gone along in our rush and speed, and it~~ demands leisure and inclination, ~~as well~~. If we have the desire for greater appreciation it seems as if there were no better place to begin than in our own houses. If we have any leisure at all, more of it is probably spent in our ~~homes~~ than elsewhere, and there we may be surrounded with

flowers or their kin at all times of the year. Some one will cry at once that this is such an expensive scheme! Not at all! No more expensive than our present method of buying a quantity of flowers occasionally. For we are learning to use them in smaller quantities and find ^{that single} a fifteen cent rose, in the right vase, makes as attractive a decoration ~~for a few days~~ as six fifteen cent roses ~~all~~ in one cluster, ~~vase~~. And when we have begun to see the beauty in the leaf and bud and stem of the plant, we shall see how much beauty there is ~~around~~ ⁱⁿ Nature to which we have been blind before. Branches without a ^{bloom} single flower may be as decorative as any flowers, and we shall bring them into our houses even in their leafless condition in winter and enjoy them more than we knew we could. There are so many graceful branches thoroughly suitable for this kind of simple arrangement - all the evergreens, in winter, the colored leaves of sassafras, oak and maple in the fall, the flowering maple, and ^{the} elm (which is very beautiful) and evergreens with their new growth in the spring, and innumerable flowering trees and shrubs. All of these may be had for a little effort and now when automobiles are so common it is an easy matter for most people to get ^{out} into the country for such material. The person of appreciation will soon see for himself the value of many things which cannot be enumerated here, and of many perhaps, of which ^{even} the decorator has not learned. It will not mean ~~the loss of~~ any ^{less} love of flowers, but the broadening of our appreciation and the opening of our eyes.

It is possible, and earnestly to be desired, that if we surround ourselves with more of Nature in her varying stages we may regain some ~~of our~~ appreciation of the seasons which we have lost. We live in a climate of four seasons, each different and each with

its own characteristics, but between our striving for the unusual and the florist's striving for increased income, every effort is made to make us forget ^{Seasons} ~~then~~ and to make spring and summer bloom for us during the entire year. The forcing of ^{plants} ~~things~~ out of season has been carried to an extreme but no less in the flower than in the ^{garden} market industry - spring flowers, azaleas, mignonette, forget-me-not, etc., bloom all winter, pussy willows come in at Christmas and apple blossoms in February, until we have no seasons ^{left}. Things that were once a luxury and a treat out of season have come to be so much the expected that we have spring flowers in bloom everywhere two or three months before spring comes. Some one will ask, "Why shouldn't we?" to which we ~~may~~ reply, "There is no reason why we shouldn't except that our minds are so constituted that we like changes and tire a bit of some things when we have had them in sufficient abundance for a time. ^{But} ~~So~~ when the flowers are blooming out of doors in the spring we have lived through spring in our minds and want late spring and early summer - we are ready for peonies ~~(in our minds)~~ a month before their time, and we wish for summer when it is spring. We live out of season, and all those associations which should belong with ^{Nature's changes} ~~the seasons~~ are destroyed while we enjoy ^{our flowers only} ~~things~~ at hothouse seasons. The trouble is with our attitude, not with the greenhouse which has been a boon in making it possible for us to enjoy flowers during all the year. But we need to return to a better balance where the greenhouse fulfils its function in giving us flowers, which, ~~without it~~, would not thrive in our climatic conditions - carnations, chrysanthemums, poinsettias, etc., and roses and lily-of-the-valley all winter, and in extending certain seasons so that we may enjoy spring indoors as well as out, so fitting the one season into the other. We need to find the balance between the extreme

Japanese viewpoint which values no flower in bloom out of its ^{time} ~~season~~, and our own present seasonless attitude.

When we adopt this more extended use of flowers and branches in our houses the question of vases or receptacles becomes ~~an all~~ important ~~one~~. Having chosen a few choice specimens the receptacle becomes an important part of the composition, if a subordinate one. For the wrong kind of vase may ruin all the beauty the flowers possess. If a subordinate part of the whole, its color must not be conspicuous or the vase will be as much the center of attraction as the flowers - neutral tones are generally best, tho there are times when a colored vase of either a dominant or contrasting harmony is very effective - these times are few, however, in comparison to the total number of times we arrange flowers. While the beauty of a flower depends upon the beauty of color and line, the beauty of the vase depends primarily upon the beauty of line - so long as its color is unobtrusive its shape is the more important factor. Continuous unbroken lines are better than broken, so we should discourage the use of cut glass vases which in their broken, uneven surfaces are less simple and less beautiful. And we should likewise discourage the use of articles not meant for flower receptacles - pitchers etc., show so plainly that they were intended for other purposes that they do not make good flower receptacles. Plain vases are preferable but simple conventional designs are not objectionable and are often ornamental. Vases are of all kinds, materials and sizes, and our choice of a vase must be guided by the flower for which it is to be used. The conformity of the lines of the vase with those of the flower is important - obviously a slender vase is better for the delicate, graceful cosmos than a lower rounded bowl-shaped affair - as well as the

question of the balance of mass, or the relative appearance of the solidity of the receptacle and the flowers. The tall, somewhat heavy gladiolus requires a slender but substantial vase rather than the sort of vase suitable for cosmos or we shall create a top-heavy effect - top heaviness is not pleasing but no more is bottom heaviness and the vase suitable for sweet peas must be delicate rather than heavy such as might be appropriate for short stemmed laurel, etc. In vertical arrangements the relative height of the receptacle and the flowers arising from it should be one to two - the height of the vase being one third the height of the whole. If this proportion cannot be secured the vase should be taller rather than shorter. In broader arrangements the receptacle may have a greater proportional height than in the vertical. The balance of mass in the flowers is an important consideration in arranging them in the vase, and it is an aid to arrange them on each side of an imaginary vertical line running through the middle of the vase. This does not mean we are striving for bilateral symmetry - far from it; balance rather than symmetry is the ideal of art - in the words of Mr. Felton "in all floral art it is well-balanced zigzag lines and gently undulating heights that should be aimed at" and we merely want one side to balance the other while both are somewhat irregular. An essential rule is this type of arrangement is the one that says that the farther a thing is from the center, the smaller it may be and yet balance a larger thing nearer the center. Plants in Nature are seldom symmetrical but usually are well balanced and we may get many suggestions by observing them.

After all these various factors have been considered and worked out, there still remains the important one of environment - needless to say the background must not be of a clashing color. The ideal

background is of course a plain neutral one which like the vase serves to set the flower off, but this is not always to be found and we must do the best we can. Too many accessories in the way of bric-a-brac and furnishings mar the effect when they are present creating a confused and restless atmosphere. The uses and furnishings of the room do to some extent determine the flowers to be most used - but in general flowers may be used everywhere. The reception hall is in most houses, probably the best place for striking effects, while only the more delicate and dainty flowers are appropriate for a bedroom. Aside from this there can be no suggestions save perhaps for the dining table which should be made as restful as possible.

A unique but simple idea which will appeal to the flower lover who believes in everyday home decoration is the flower holder for the frontdoor. The prettiest and most inexpensive are of course straw or basketry ~~which may be found~~ in various tones to harmonize or contrast with the design and material of the door. Hung from the knocker or suspended from underneath the doorbell by a green or red silk cord or slender iron chain, and filled with a few ^{Seasonal} ~~fresh~~ flowers or twigs or branches, ~~that are seasonal~~, it is very effective and creates a cordial and hospitable atmosphere.

A good deal has been said about simplifying to the extent of using a very few pieces of the material at hand for the decoration of our homes at all times. For a long time the expression "floral decoration" has carried with it the idea of elaborate decorations for festal occasions. But as most of our days are spent in quiet everyday affairs it seems fitting that whatever we consider beautiful should be a part of our lives then rather than saved only for

special occasions. The festal times remain and will come in their round in due time and then we may decorate more elaborately ~~according to our ideas~~. Most of us will want to use flowers that are choicer and use them in greater quantities. We can very well have the two types of decoration, but of course the more one comes to value the entire beauty of a flower, the more natural and simple and artistic we shall wish our choicest decorations to be. However much we may try to learn from the Japanese in these things it will be long before our spirit is in accord with theirs and very long before we shall adopt the exclusive decoration of the few flowers. The Japanese set before their guests their very most artistic arrangements which are never composed of more than three or five flowers, while we set before them quantities of flowers. Our scheme is surely true to our ideas and spirit and so long as artistic skill and simplicity govern it, it may be as well in its way as theirs. And perhaps our use of the more is partly because our idea is to develop a color effect that is fresh and beautiful as well.

~~And~~ When we begin to dress our homes as well as ourselves there are as few restrictions as to the ways and means as there are to the materials and colors of dress materials. Years ago the idea of house decoration was to conceal practically all of the interior of the house with flowers and greens and we find pictures that do not make us wonder when we read the following advice: "Let us remember what we are here for - to decorate. We are not apposed to create a tropical jungle or turn the rooms into miniature flower gardens. Our object should be to add to the beauty of the surroundings and not detract from them by an obtrusive display." Of course, greater simplicity has crept into this phase as well as others of floral art, but any one who saw the overloaded and flowerburdened mantles at the Boston Flower Show

realizes that we have yet to learn that "decoration exists only through sacrifice," ^{Puvion} (~~Pierre~~ de Chavannes) that the elimination of the quantity must be the rule not for one form of floral art but every form. Flowers and flowering plants are used extensively and for larger affairs palms, etc., for background effects. Vases of flowers may be set around in different ones or some more pretentious schemes may be worked out - certain architectural features of the house are treated as accent points, and some wall spaces may lend themselves well to a panel treatment in which adjustable glasses attached to a rod form the foundation for the flowers and greens or bamboo panel effects may be simply filled with flowers. The ways are many and attractive. The scheme most often followed is that of using a different color and flower in each room - each room then becomes a unit in itself. It is attractive but perhaps a plan of using the same flower in every room may be equally attractive. If the flower is beautiful we should not tire of seeing it in one short reception, tea or whatever the function ^{which} may occur. And the use of one flower would make one unity of the whole instead of a unity of each room and the guest might carry away a more lasting and definite impression rather than a number of lesser and more confused ones. It is merely a suggestion which the writer would like to see carried out. In all indoor decorations and especially those in small rooms, flowers with strong fragrance, - e.g. paper white narcissus, lilac, etc., - must not be used both because their odor may be annoying to some of the guests and because they make the atmosphere oppressive and heavy. It is sometimes necessary to choose flowers for decoration with some regard to their keeping qualities if they must be used in such a

way that sufficient water cannot be supplied. Chrysanthemums and carnations are both good for such times. In England carnations are used much more for decorations than here - especially in large country houses and mansions of London where thousands of these flowers with stems two and three feet long have sometimes been used in one order. It is often used in combination with gypsophila, valley or daisies, because of the nakedness of ~~its~~ ^{their} stems, but a plenty of green would probably do as well.

Home wedding decorations should be governed by the same principles we have applied to all floral work, while they range from very simple schemes to elaborate representations of rose gardens, conservatories and even orange groves. There is perhaps more excuse for what some might call overdecorating here for sometimes the idea seems to be to give ~~something~~ the effect of an outdoor wedding tho the season forces us within. Abundance of material is absolutely necessary then, but there must nevertheless be some restraint in its use. An altar or bower at which the ceremony is performed is generally made by a background of greens interspersed with flowers, green and white being probably the combination most used. Large or small flowers according to the ^{taste} ~~krkk~~ of the individual may be made effective, the small ones woven in with the green, the large ones making more striking effects in tall vases or clusters. In smaller homes the aisle is more often formed by ribbon but in larger ones flower stands connected by ribbons are very effective - they are usually of the more striking flowers like Easter lilies, long stemmed roses and chrysanthemums. The hall may be decorated with such standards and the staircase is always trimmed, more often with smilax and small flowers woven in and out with a bunch tied at the post. Green and white, while the combination most often used perhaps, need not be

used continuously. The use of colors is becoming more general and much more beautiful effects can be secured with them. The various rooms of the house may be decorated in any way desired, with a different flower in each room or with the same general scheme throughout. Festooning of greens are less popular than formerly and the idea of the wedding bell has gone "out" with them.

Church decorations are more elaborate usually and are often very beautiful, especially when the decorations conform with the architectural features of the building. The first consideration in church decoration is more often one of line rather than color, and a Gothic interior must obviously be treated quite differently from a Colonial. Simplicity should have a controlling influence even in such a large and elaborate scheme. Of course the altar is the center of attraction, one might say; it is the point to which all turn their attention and the decoration must lead up to it. It is usually banked with green and a few plants or flowers. The more striking flowers are especially fitted for church decorations because of the size of the building - small flowers unless used in great quantities are not effective. The treatment of the main aisle is important and in most cases is decorated with branches of flowers tied to the pews with ribbons at intervals or with standards of cut flowers such as roses, sometimes made up to represent rose trees. In some decorations flowers are tied to every pew, but that invariably gives the effect of being overdone. In many churches there are columns and balconies to be reckoned with - there is no better way of treating them than by winding or garlanding the columns and draping the balconies. It may be done with green vines or smilax, either hollyhock or southern, or with greens and clusters of flowers giving something

the effect of a climbing rose vine. The church wedding is usually followed by a reception at the house where the decorations may follow the same scheme used at the church or be entirely different. And while elaborate decorations for weddings are often used and we say there may be more ^{justification} ~~excuse~~ for them, the simpler ones are usually more beautiful and therefore to be preferred.

Whatever the social function we are wont to feed our friends and consequently the dining table is called into service, and of course it requires decorating. Then we entertain so much at dinners and luncheons when we wish the table to be attractive that table decoration has come to be an important phase of floral decoration, demanding considerable study and thought. These table decorations vary from those for the simple luncheon for a few persons to those required for formal and large dinners where as many as one hundred people may be seated at one huge table pretentiously decorated in the form of a miniature city park ^{with} ~~at~~ a pond, with fountain and lilies, ^{its} ~~its~~ streets and street lamps, flower beds and even automobile race ~~ways~~ tracks! Of course this marks the extreme and the majority of table decorations are for smaller affairs. When people are to be seated at the table the decorations

must be low enough to permit of one's seeing over them, or high enough to see under them. The size of vases used must be governed somewhat by the size and form of the table; if the vases are too small the decoration appears small and lacking in character no matter how well the flowers are arranged, while if too large the effect will be dense and heavy. There is as great a danger of overdoing this form of decoration as any other and the decorator needs to remember that dishes and accessories must have their share of space and the table must not be

crowded or loaded. The low decorations are becoming more and more popular and they are undoubtedly the most attractive for smaller tables; but it is not so new a form of decoration as we are wont to think. It was used, tho not commonly, as far back as 1891. Low baskets, vases and plaques make simple and beautiful foundations for a considerable variety of flowers. Large heavy flowers like large chrysanthemums are less suitable because too large and heavy, but small chrysanthemums are very effective and there is a wealth of small material. Considerable green helps to lighten the effect, and so far as possible it should be the foliage which belongs with the flower. Nothing is so good with roses as sprays of their own foliage. Green sprays laid upon the table should be light; delicate and clear cut - too often heavy sprays of smilax are used which are less pleasing. Sprays of Wichuriana roses can be used with other roses very well. Daffodils also are best when used with a profusion of their own leaves and the same is true of many flowers. Maidenhair is the most delicate green when the flower neither has foliage nor foliage that is attractive enough to use. More general use can well be made of other foliage than is usually done - such foliage as Euonymus, Mahonia, Japanese maple, and autumn leaves. Flowers of strong fragrance should especially be avoided in table decoration unless the gathering is small and the hostess is assured that they are not distasteful to any of her guests. Brilliantly colored flowers are generally to be avoided for they are annoying to some and are very likely to clash with some of the gowns. The question of color especially of the effect of artificial light upon it is of more importance in this phase of floral work than in any other, for so often the dining room is darkened and lighted by candles or electricity even when no lights are used in the other rooms, - it may be done for luncheons at midday. Artificial light weakens some colors while it intensifies others and changes yet others considerably

bringing out certain qualities which were not conspicuous in the daylight. Shades of blue, mauve and violet are not good in artificial light, some shades showing a decidedly reddish tinge, and yellow fades almost to white. This effect of artificial light becomes a particularly troublesome problem when colors are combined, ~~and the decorator must give it considerable thought and study.~~ Myosotis and yellow tulips or freesias which make a charming combination by daylight become wholly ineffective and characterless by evening light. Some tones - especially those of pink and bronze - are made more beautiful, ~~so that there still remains an abundance of material.~~ When the plaques are used for the centerpiece ~~they~~ usually constitute the entire decoration, save for the boutonnières and corsages laid at the places which serve a decorative function for a time - but often a vase or basket placed in the center is accompanied with a few smaller baskets or vases. Years ago such a scheme was placed upon the table with mathematical precision adhering strictly to some geometrical pattern, but now we arrange them more simply and naturally - though usually we think it must be symmetrical. But as we strive more for the natural effect and for balance rather than symmetry we shall come to follow the advice of Mr. Felton never to place two vases opposite each other either on a table or in a room. We shall arrange them irregularly with equally pleasing results. It requires considerably more skill to perfect an irregular grouping but it can be done. Accessories in various forms often accompany a table decoration - candles, silver, glass, favors, etc., - and they may be used as desired so long as they fit in harmoniously with the entire scheme and add to the effect of the whole. The aim, for a table at which guests are to be seated, should be to make it as restful as possible, and therefore the arrangement must be simple and not confused. The lighter, more delicate flowers probably

give such an effect better than the more brilliantly colored ones, but no rules can be laid down as to the material to be used. In summer it is advisable to avoid the use of those flowers which remind one of the heat without, and warm flowers in reds and purples can be employed to greater advantage at other seasons. White is especially cool and restful for summer, and no more refreshing table can be arranged than one with pond lilies and water. We should probably use white more than we do both indoors and out.

On ^{large} tables when the low decorations would not be effective higher arrangements are ~~more~~ ^{necessary.} often used. Whenever there is to be a speaker these vases must be so arranged that the guests have an unobstructed line of vision to the speaker both ^{when} sitting ^{and} standing, or the annoying portions of the scheme stand in danger of being removed from the table. This has been known to happen more than a few times even with expensive decorations. ~~Probably~~ The Ellen Terry stand is the vase most used for high effects. It is a tall slender vase which gradually broadens out at the top. It may be of any height desired so long as it is tall enough to give a clear line of vision beneath the flowers with which it is filled. When filled with long stemmed graceful flowers, such as roses, with a few flowers laid on the table around the base it is a graceful and beautiful arrangement. One larger vase in the center may have smaller ones ^{of} in the same style on either side or the smaller ones may be used on smaller tables in which case one vase is sufficient.

For teas and receptions the dining table is usually a serving table only about which the guests gather but do not seat themselves, and the question of a line of vision is not a consideration. The decorations may be of any desired size and height that is appropriate for the table, and it becomes more important that the decoration be of such

a kind that it is beautiful to look down upon, for one seldom sees it on a line with the eye. Broader vases or baskets may be used, and a larger basket artistically and daintily arranged may be very effective. Sometimes a basket in the center with smaller baskets more like favors scattered about the table are very attractive. Or the decoration may be of a kind suitable for a dinner table - no different decoration is required though an opportunity for it is given if one desires to have something different.

Perhaps there is no phase of floral art that is more interesting or offers so many opportunities for delicate and beautiful arrangements in great variety as this of table decoration, yet it is a difficult one to write about - perhaps because it is so varied. It offers endless opportunities for originality, but it, like other forms, must be seen to be appreciated - neither photographs nor words can convey any adequate idea of its beauty.

Undoubtedly the most fascinating and dainty of all the forms of floral decoration are the bouquets and baskets. Varying in size from boutonnieres to large showers and from tiny baskets to very large presentation affairs, they offer opportunity for a considerable variety and for the ~~creating~~ of charming effects. Fashion has at times decreed changes in their size and shape, but has never robbed them of their attractiveness, except occasionally when creating grossly exaggerated forms. Twenty years ago the wearer of a corsage bouquet gave the appearance of a walking flower garden, for no fewer than two dozen roses went into her adornment. Beautiful as the flowers may have been and beautiful as that same bunch of flowers might have been serving another function, it could have been nothing but ludicrous for such a purpose. Boutonnieres increased in size as corsages decreased, but finally some

sense of propriety prevailed and now in the main both forms have reached a desirable mean - occasionally a corsage errs on the side of too great size, and also occasionally on the side of too great setness or stiffness but in general a medium size and a loose, natural effect are characteristics. And certainly the loose natural effect determines to a considerable extent the beauty of the bouquet even in this more crowded form of decoration. An abundance - but not too much - of green helps to give this effect and serves also as a background for setting off the flowers. Probably the only form of bouquet in which the lack of looseness and naturalness is not a defect is the colonial bouquet which has been revived in the past few years - but even here its charm is limited by its size because of this very thing. When small, many kinds of flowers of as many colors may be crowded together and finished with a lace paper frill to make a quaint and attractive bouquet, but a larger hand bouquet made in the same fashion is pronounced unspeakable ugly.

Corsage bouquets are made of one kind of flower or of combinations of flowers - those of one kind are very attractive but not necessarily more pleasing than the combined effects. When flowers are brought so closely together, the question of color combination becomes one of very great importance, but nothing more can be said in regard to it than has already been said - and nothing more regarding the various kinds of harmonies all of which enter into this phase of the work. Harmony of form or at least not a striking lack of harmony is necessary in the most artistic bouquets, with the exception of a few flowers which for some reason fit in anywhere and everywhere. Lily-of-the-valley combines well with everything and is especially useful for breaking up a tendency to roundness and stiffness. It combines beautifully with violets not only because of the color contrast but because it breaks up the regular line of the violet bunch making it more loose and natural.

Harmony of season may well be considered to a greater extent in corsages - it is more pleasing to see flowers combined which we more naturally associated together. Of course some flowers have no season and may be used appropriately at all times - roses, carnations, lily-of-the-valley, etc. But not infrequently flowers are put together that have no associations with each other - the color scheme may be perfect, the arrangement good and yet we do not care for the combination. A case in point is a combination of apple blossoms and roses, which were recently used in a bridesmaid bouquet - the one is distinctly a greenhouse flower, except in the month of June, while the other we associate only with the out of doors and then at a season not coincident with the rose season. One place in which these harmonies of form and spirit and season may be disregarded with impunity is in the combination of several flowers of several colors. Then, they are looked upon purely as a color scheme in which the lightness, daintiness and charm of the effect is all that is desired. Corsages are generally finished with a bow of ribbon which may add very much to the whole effect. But it can add to it only when its color is harmonious. - this may seem too obvious a fact to be mentioned - but to any one who visited the recent Flower Show in Boston the necessity of emphasizing this point will be clear. In probably the majority of corsages in the table decorations which were entered in competition for a prize the ribbon was "off" color enough to spoil the effect. Of course every decorator knows ribbons should harmonize or contrast, but apparently he sometimes lets his desire of creating an odd effect overrule his better artistic judgment. Ribbon in general should be used to lighten up a design, not to tone it down, and it is therefore best to have it correspond with the brightest and most cheerful color used.

The ~~various~~ bridal bouquets form an important part of the florists' work, and while we are wont to think of the shower bouquet as the conventional bridal form we are surprised to find its varieties of shape. It is small or large with light or heavy showers, it is a shower alone, or the shower falls from the hand or over the arm ^{or} and it may even become a floral muff. The Empire Shower is carried in the hollow of the arm rather than in the hand and the shower which is heavy, falling over the arm comes from all parts of the bouquets. In the Alice Roosevelt Shower the shower likewise falls over the arm but comes only from the outside of the bouquet. This form of bouquet used for the first time, as its name implies, at the wedding of Alice Roosevelt, has remained one of the ^{popular forms for} ~~varieties of~~ bridal bouquets. Showers until that time had been round but this was more of a sheaf effect, which spread over the arm tapering at the end. The round hand bouquets with showers are still used for probably the majority of bridal bouquets and are very attractive. A medium size is again the most desirable. Some bouquets have no bouquet for the hand and are made with the shower alone falling from a large well arranged knot of silk gauze ribbon which fills the position generally occupied by the flowers. This silk gauze ribbon or maline is an important part of any shower bouquet as it constitutes the most of the shower, and much of the daintiness of the whole depends upon it. ~~One~~ bride, wishing for a new creation, conceived the idea of a bridal ring to be carried on the arm instead of a bouquet. It resembles a crescent wreath to which a shower is tied, but seems very inappropriate for the occasion. And muffs of flowers are even used at times with a shower effect falling from ~~it~~ ^{them}. Of course white flowers are the conventional ones for this purpose, but sometimes a touch of a delicate color is used in Cecile Brunner roses, orchids, etc. Roses, lily-of-the-valley, orchids,

sweet peas, gardenias, all make up well in any of these forms either singly or combined with some one other.

Shower bouquets are used for other occasions than the bridal bouquet - but we may extend the term "bridal bouquet" to include all those bouquets which are carried at a wedding. The bridesmaids' bouquets, always of a color, are generally in the round, head shower form, and may be made of a great variety of material. This form is sometimes changed to the Shepherd's Crook or Directoire stick which are especially suitable for church weddings, but much of their effectiveness depends upon the grace with which they are carried. The crook or stick is wound with satin ribbon to match the flowers, a bunch of light and lightly arranged flowers is tied to the stick just below the crook while from it falls a large bow and streamers of the ribbon. A small knot or bow of ribbon finishes off the end of the crook, and the whole is a very pleasing arrangement in which the entire spirit is one of simplicity. The Directoire stick differs only in being straight with a knot at the end instead of a crook. At times there are attempts made to revive the custom of trimming bridesmaids' hats with fresh flowers, but it does not seem to come into general use. They are especially appropriate for outdoor country weddings and are used for them to some extent. Flower girls may carry bunches of flowers; the large hats tied up with satin ribbon and loosely filled with flowers are more attractive and more often carried.

Probably the present way of arranging bouquets represents one of the most satisfactory phases of our flower decoration. In general ^{it} ~~that~~ is simpler, more natural and more beautiful and pleasing than any other form.

But one phase of which so much can be said is that of baskets - perhaps because the use of baskets is so much more recent.

But nowhere else with equal emphasis should we cry out "simplify, simplify." A basket filled with as many varieties of plants as possible and topped off with one or several bows of ribbon - that is, in general, the style of basket arrangement in vogue. It is a confused mixture that is not artistic - but it can be easily made entirely pleasing when the same general principles upon which we have dwelt so much at length are applied to it. Baskets are of varying materials, sizes, and shapes adapted to various methods of treatment - in general they are and should be of neutral tones and also like vases, of good lines. Then if the decorator will limit himself to a small variety of material in each basket with an eye to its real harmony in color, form, etc., the result will be pleasing.

Baskets are used now especially at the Christmas and Easter seasons, less at other times but still to a considerable extent. Instead of making a gift of a plant alone, a plant in a basket or a "made-up" basket is more often sent. Whether it is a custom which will become permanent or ^{is merely} a passing fashion we cannot judge. The materials with which they may be filled must vary with the season but there is never any lack. At Christmas time red and green are of course the prevailing colors and at that time no basket is prettier than one containing Ardisia or Jerusalem Cherry, Cyrtanum falcatum or Rochefordianum and Holly with red ribbon to finish it off. If we depart from this red and green color scheme we find a variety of flowering plants, but less to differentiate the season from Easter. For now we have azaleas, Easter lilies, etc., at Christmas time suggesting the coming of spring before the heaviest of snows have fallen and nothing distinctly "Easterly", unless it be the lilies, is left. An abundance of spring flowers from bulbs and rambler roses and apple blossoms

suggest rather that Easter be marked as the real beginning of spring. While Christmas giving has always been general the custom of Easter giving has been general for not more than thirty years and has grown out of the use of plants and flowers in the decorations of Catholic and Episcopal churches ~~for~~ ^{at} Easter~~time~~. Probably the use of baskets is more general at this season than at Christmas and some florists estimate that the Easter business in baskets is four times as great as that in cut flowers. Sweet peas, pansies, myosotis, violets, antirrhinum, roses, lilies, bulbs, heathers, primroses, cyclamen, 'spirea, azaleas, hydrangea, genesta, bouganvillea, rhododendron, lilac - there is no end to the flowers which fill the flower shops at this spring season!

At Christmas time the use of baskets constitutes a much smaller part of the decorations than at Easter. For happily we still cling to our custom of using Christmas greens in the form of roping and wreaths and sprays. Ground pine which was so much used for years is being replaced by laurel for roping, and by laurel, holly, boxwood and evergreen for wreaths. Evergreens might perhaps be used much more than they are, and it seems probable that at the rate at which laurel is now used, the bushes are being robbed so that we may be forced to find a substitute. Southern smilax and evergreen trees are appropriately used for decorating churches and large halls, but are less fitted for the home except the more pretentious ones.

Memorial Day is another time of year demanding its own appropriate floral designs - largely in the nature of funeral work of which we have spoken elsewhere.

Many florists are making ^a feature of Valentine's Day, with red flowers and unique favors, some of St. Patrick's Day, some of Mothers' Day in May when carnations, especially white ones are in demand. And it seems as if we might revive the custom of May baskets - not in an

expensive way as there are many seasons of giving and May day follows rather closely upon Easter - but small, inexpensive baskets could be filled with flowers, often with wild flowers, making charming little gifts and keeping alive a pretty custom.

Perhaps the arrangement of window and porch boxes does not come directly within the field of the floral decorator, but if not, it might. Their use should be encouraged for our houses might be made much more attractive with them - but before they are used to a greater extent they must be made more attractive. For some reason they have lagged far behind the advance in other forms of decoration, remaining stereotyped and not usually beautiful. When there is much available material, why should they be restricted to dracaena, geraniums, vinca and senecio scandens? One seldom sees boxes filled with other material.[†]

Perhaps the first things which come to the minds of some people when one mentions floral decoration are funeral designs - and from the viewpoint of the florist it is one of the most important forms of work that comes to him. It is always present in rush times and in dull, and it constitutes a remunerative work for him. Probably the most atrocious and inappropriate things ever perpetrated in the name of floral decoration have been done for funeral purposes. There was a time when it was deemed appropriate that the funeral design show the interests or vocation of the deceased, and accordingly we find a floral piano designed for the funeral of the president of a piano factory, a floral pillow worked out carefully to represent a letter, the stamp, post-mark, address and all being carefully worked out, for the funeral of a postman - to say nothing of a floral spinning wheel and a floral candelabra, ^{with a} ~~the~~ standard of small roses, the shades of pansies edged with a fine white daisy, the significance

of which is not apparent. Needless to say, that was the time of set designs when anything approaching naturalness was not even dreamed of. The floral broken column, "gates ajar", the broken wheel, harp and stiff designs of all kinds were in vogue. Happily we are getting away from that sort of thing, though we still have them with us, and only a few years ago a floral aeroplane was made for the funeral of Mr. Wilbur Wright. In 1894 we read of the loosely and tastefully arranged wreaths and bouquets as "among the most popular arrangements for funeral purposes, there having been a decided falling off in the call for set designs." That probably marked the beginning of better funeral work which was not to become general for ten or fifteen years yet. But at the present time the vast amount of funeral work is of this simpler, more natural and tasteful type, the large cumbersome pieces measuring six feet and more in height being used only by the fraternal orders and for the funerals of prominent persons. Some of it is simple and unpretentious while some is extravagantly costly, but we can find nothing to excel the extravagance of customs existing about 1887. Then, occasionally the casket was made entirely of flowers as many as 27000 violets being used in one casket! Or the church pew of the deceased was decorated with upholsteries and cushions of flowers and renewed for a time frequently enough to keep fresh!

The forms of the present day funeral designs are sprays, pillars, wreaths, casket covers and corners and loose bunches of which the wreaths and sprays are most in demand. Wreaths are of all sizes and either round or crescent-shaped, the crescent shape being somewhat more in favor at the present time. It is less monotonous than the round one and gives more opportunity for a variety of treatment, ~~at the same time that it preserves the unity.~~ The broadest portion of the wreath is often treated as an accent or finishing point which is very

effective. Materials for wreaths are almost unlimited for there is not only the greenhouse group of flowers but all those which grow outdoors in the summer and the leaves of various trees as well. Gypsophila, asters, pansies, achillea, candytuft, mignonette all work up quite as well in wreaths as roses, lily-of-the-valley, sweet peas and orchids. There are no more attractive wreaths than combinations of sweet peas and a liberal quantity of maidenhair fern, lily-of-the-valley and orchids, Easter lilies and maidenhair, and roses with lily-of-the-valley or gypsophila. Sweet peas may be combined with other flowers but Easter lilies are best when made up alone with green and finished with perhaps a bow of white chiffon or ribbon. Formerly only white flowers were used for funeral work but now there is no color which is not used, so the florist is not restricted in his work. The greenery is quite an important part of the wreath for by it more than anything else the more natural and loose effect is gained. A few years ago wreaths were made flat and stiff with the flowers pressed closely together, but when the more ^{naturalistic} ~~materialistic~~ effects were desired flowers were set into the frame standing up. This, too, was carried sometimes to an extreme when they were made to stand up six and even eight inches. Midway between the two extremes the effect is ~~much~~ more pleasing. Leaves of magnolia, leucothoe, ivy and galax are frequently used for wreaths ~~leaves~~ - they always give a stiffer and less beautiful effect, but they are often pleasing. Much use of flowers combined with them is to be discouraged for fresh living flowers do not combine well with stiff, lifeless and treated leaves. The advice to simplify is especially applicable in the work of making up wreaths for there seems to be no other place in floral work when one may find such varieties of indiscriminate combinations.

Next to the wreath the spray is probably the most in demand. It is essentially a loose and natural arrangement - a "bunch" it is

sometimes called. Long stemmed flowers are best adapted to this form - roses, carnations, gladioli, etc., and some of the heavier flowers which will not work in to other forms of work - such as callas and chrysanthemums - may be effectively tied together in a spray. The spray may be long and narrow or oval as may be desired. The end may be finished with green or a bow of ribbon, and frequently some flower other than that used for the spray makes an attractive finish close to the bow or green - for example, lilies to finish a spray of American Beauty roses, violets with narcissus, and a few pansies in a spray of white carnations. The smaller flowers like pansies, violets, and valley are less often used in a spray, but with a little more work they can be made into most attractive sprays. The simplification of material should apply to greens as well as flowers, for often several kinds of greens are used in one design but not with pleasing effects. Only recently a sweet pea spray sent out by one of the leading florists of one of our big cities contained four kinds of greens - polystichum, whitmanni, adiantum, and asparagus - and when it was finished off with a bunch of forced lily of the valley with its yellow green foliage, there was a mixture of color and form which was not harmonious. There was a quantity of beautiful material in the spray but it was so indiscriminately ^{combined} ~~chosen~~ that the result was not artistic - chiefly because it lacked unity.

Sprays of this kind made somewhat longer are used as casket sprays and sometimes a double casket spray is made from two sprays placed end to end, and tied with a bow of ribbon; the whole being of any length desired up to six feet. Occasionally the casket spray is made of foliage - leaves of cocos, cycas, areca, etc., tied with ribbons. These sprays are effective, and are especially satisfactory in extreme heat as they wilt much less readily. Casket corners made on cross frames with one arm and the upper portion cut off are effective when

well arranged. As they are used in conspicuous positions flowers which do not wilt quickly should be used if possible. Casket covers are used occasionally - such a blanket of flowers of course is expensive so that its cost prevents its ~~from~~ coming into general use. When softly and loosely arranged it is exceedingly beautiful. As it must drape over the edges of the casket the smaller or more flexible flowers only are adapted to this type of work. Sweet peas, violets, orchids, lily-of-the-valley, etc. are very appropriate. The casket cover may be made of one kind of flower only with a plenty of green or two flowers may be combined, when one is frequently used in a sort of panel effect.

Floral pillows have been used for funeral designs ever since funeral decoration began. It is a less popular form at the present time, but ten years ago it was most popular next to the wreath. While its form is conventional considerable variation can be made in the making, up so that it need not be stiff. 16 x 24 inches is the size most frequently used. Years ago these pillows were always lettered "mother," "father," "brother," or "sister," but it is only done now when the customer insists upon it.

The floral cross is still frequently used and may be made loose and attractive. Smaller flowers only fit into its design but larger ones may be used for accent points - for example a calla may be placed at the point of crossing of the arms with the post - or ~~frequently~~ the four ends ^{may be treated} ~~are used~~ as lesser accent points.

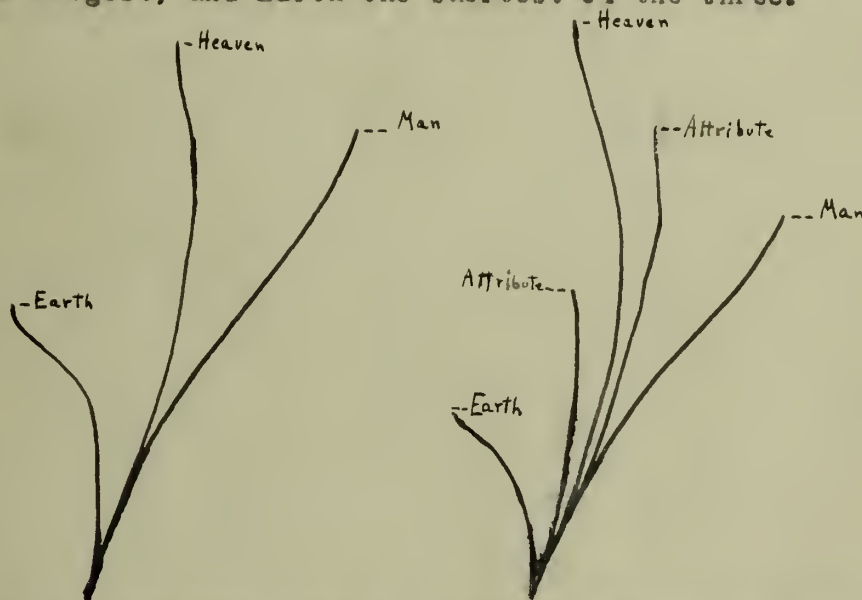
The florist is frequently called upon to make a crepe spray to attach at the door. Such spray should be about 4' long and 8" - 12" wide. Cycas or other foliage tied with purple ribbon with a bow and long streamers not too wide are effective, or it may be of flowers and foliage, the flowers pointing downward except at the top where it is finished with a few flowers which point upward. Carnations, roses,

and violets or galax leaves in oval or crescent wreaths are also used for this purpose occasionally. For a child sometimes a number of narrow ribbon streamers to which are tied with bows a few buds or lily-of-the-valley are appropriately and attractively ~~used~~ arranged.

It would seem strange to write at such length upon the subject of floral decoration with no more than casual mention of the floral art of those people with whom more than any other in the world it is a real art, practised not by the few but the many. Flowers are a greater factor in the life of the Japanese than in the life of any other people and years of study and training in their arrangement constitute as much a part of a girl's education - and more - as cooking and serving in our western countries. It has been practised by men and women alike and some of Japan's most famous generals have, feeling its beneficent and calming influence, made themselves masters of the art. Developing slowly out of their Buddhistic faith with its desire to preserve all forms of life, ^{with} its first rules formulated around the custom of offering plants and flowers to their gods, it has become so thoroughly imbued with symbolic meaning that no westerner or person of other faith can approach it with a thoroughly sympathetic attitude. But appreciating at least a portion of its artistic beauty we may go to it to learn many of the principles of artistic work adopting from it only so much as is in accord with our spirit and taste - which "much" we may apply to the beautifying of our own floral arrangements.

Ike-bana, the most beautiful in line of all the many schools of floral arrangement, signifies living flowers. The aim in all arrangements is to give the effect of a living flower or plant, and consequently not only the flower but the growth of the entire plant is studied with care and its arrangement must reproduce these conditions as closely as

possible. For this reason rare flowers with whose habit of growth the artist cannot familiarize himself are never used. We are all more or less familiar with their simple arrangements of a few flowers but probably few of us understand that each flower, (or leaf in foliage arrangements) has its own distinctive name, meaning and line from which to depart would be to render it non-Japanese. Three main branches - Heaven, the longest, Mankind, and Earth, the shortest, arranged in a triangular form, with Heaven, Mankind or Earth and the base of the plant as it rises from the water marking the corners of the triangle, form the basis of all the flower compositions. Heaven is always placed in the center with Earth and Mankind one on each side, the side being determined by the style in which it is arranged - whether *Ih* (female, with Earth to the right) or *Yo* (male, Earth at the left). Heaven is always the longest, and Earth the shortest of the three.



The tips of all branches turn up to suggest aspiration, but no two branches are of the same height, no two point in the same direction and no two cross each other. Five and seven flowers are frequently used, the added ones serving as attributes of these three principles. But the flowers used are always of an uneven number, partly because even numbers are considered unlucky and partly because an uneven number

permits an arrangement without repetition - a matter of great importance. For the whole conception of art to the Japanese is one of balance rather than symmetry - an art in which beauty of line and proportion is secured without repetition. Every arrangement should have buds, half-open and open flowers, the bud forming the Earth principle, the half-open flower Heaven, and the open flower Man. Every flower and leaf must show plainly and hide no other - a detail requiring considerable thought and skill in the cutting off of superfluous flowers. The surface of the water represents the soil from which the plant springs and at this point the arrangement must suggest strength and stability. It is true of growing plants, and as the aim sought in flower arrangements is naturalness, the composition must reproduce this same effect. Any composition spreading at the base is therefore defective, however, beautiful its upper leaves and flowers may be, and ~~moreover~~ it is not Japanese.

The Japanese never use flowers out of season. Being close observers, and therefore lovers of Nature, they find so much of beauty at all seasons of the year that they attach no value to a flower forced into bloom at a time other than that at which it naturally blooms out-of-doors. And unlike ourselves they look upon branches as flowers and equally beautiful parts of the tree and use them extensively - often for their most important decorations, as they outlast any floral decorations and in large rooms are more striking than flowers. May the time come when we westerners cease long enough from our rush and tension to learn something of this spirit of appreciation and to attach more value to Nature's changing moods and seasons! To the Japanese, the growth of the plant from flower to fruit signifies the moving of the plant soul from the flower to the leaf, to the fruit and then to the branches, and flower arrangements vary with the season to reflect Nature's

prevailing mood. In the spring, when the soul is in the flowers, the flowers are loose and spreading and the vase is filled to the brim with water to suggest the abundance of water at that season. The soul is in the leaves in summer, and young green leaves are used in abundance in full and spreading arrangements and in low broad receptacles, which, showing more water gave a cooler effect. In autumn the soul still remains in the leaves but they are less abundant and the branches are more apparent, so the arrangement ^{is} ~~should be~~ simpler giving more attention to beauty of line than to foliage or flowers. When winter arrives the soul has passed into the branches, the compositions are simple with few curves and each line stands out clear cut. In March when high winds prevail the branches are bent into ^{Unusual} ~~universal~~ curves which suggest the blowing of the winds. Further than this certain flowers are used for certain occasions, some colors being unlucky while others are lucky, some express ⁱⁿ peace, some hostile feeling, etc. The Japanese imaginative mind has woven much of superstition and symbolism even into their use of flowers all of which is rather meaningless to us, and into which we cannot go for lack of time.

The Japanese desire to preserve life in any form has influenced their flower receptacles as well - ~~and probably~~ because of this, rather than for any other reason, their vases are generally wide and open-mouthed. The greater the surface exposed to the air, the more oxygen the water contains and the longer the flowers remain fresh. This keen appreciation of line and form has led them in many cases to design vases for individual flowers that the entire composition might possess true artistic harmony. Hanging receptacles are used as well, usually for vines and plants whose growth is not upright, though their use originated in their delicacy of feeling which fancied a lack of

gratitude was shown in placing flowers which were gifts in positions where they were looked down upon - they should be looked up to and accordingly some other means of arrangement must be devised. The same delicacy of feeling for ~~other~~ people prompts them, in making gifts of flowers, to send buds only that the recipient may have the pleasure of watching the flowers develop. Bronze is a popular material for vases, resembling, to their minds, Mother Earth more closely than anything else. But other materials are used though the colors are nearly all pastel tones.

Quite definite rules are laid down for the relative proportions of vase and flowers - one may discover perhaps the source from which rules already mentioned have doubtless been derived. In vertical arrangements the flower - measured from the top of Heaven to the water - is one and one half times the height of the vase. In low, flat vases the highest flower is one and one half times the diameter of the vase. If the vase is set on a stand the highest flower is one and one half times the height, including the stand. Heaven, as has been said, is one and one half times the height of the vase, Man one half the height of Heaven and Earth one half the height of Man.

While there are many schools of flower arrangement these principles remain the same, and form the foundation of their art. So many rules would seem to us to make it too fixed and set, but each one of these has been worked out after years of experimenting and searching for the beautiful - for it all has been a pursuit of beauty for itself alone. Therefore it remains the most thoroughly beautiful and artistic floral art of the world.

Japanese flower arrangement has had an undoubted influence upon some of our own flower compositions which show that we are already

beginning to learn the value of a few flowers well arranged. It is equally important that we learn from it also the value and beauty of line and form and growth, a greater appreciation of the value of simplicity, the most fundamental principle of all arts, - and we might add the value of the seasons. We may not care for it in its entirety, and it is neither expected nor desired that we adopt the Japanese style of arrangement - it is too far removed from our own thought and spirit for it to be expressive of our life. But it is to be hoped that from it we may learn something of these principles which we may adapt to our own methods, thereby making our own floral decorations more beautiful and bringing it more nearly to the level of an art.

In this long discussion both defects and virtues of modern floral decoration have been pointed out, but it is hoped that the ideals and principles which must guide it if it is to continue to progress, have been dwelt upon at greater length. While there are glaring defects in some of its present phases, it has been proceeding slowly but gradually from stiff and set and overdone creations to increasingly simpler, more natural and more beautiful arrangements. That it is still in a ~~transitional~~ ^{transitional} stage seems probable. But because of our own thought and spirit, this transitional stage is full of dangers - some of them have already been spoken of. Besides these, the florist decorator is oftener a commercial and business man first and a decorator second - the question he asks himself seven or eight times out of ten is "will this sell?" or "will this take?" rather than "is this beautiful?" But it is not for one who has no knowledge of the business world to judge him - he has gone into the florist business to make a livelihood and the keen competition of the present day probably forces him to put this question before all others. But this being true, it is, nevertheless, a hindrance ^{to} ~~in~~ the development of the work as an art,

for the first question every artist asks is "Is this beautiful?" "If not we will have nothing of it." But if the florist has this artistic purpose and conditions permit his giving more thought and time to this side of his profession, he can do a great deal in educating the public to a greater appreciation of these better arrangements. We know that some florists are trying to do this very thing. Another hindrance in this floral art development lies in the very nature of the art itself. Every other art - music, painting, decorating, etc., has a certain permanency which is completely lacking in anything concerned with flowers. At the best one floral picture lasts only a few days and whatever of permanency there can be is only in the ~~mental~~^{mental} picture in the mind of the individual. Every other artist puts unlimited time and thought into the creating of his pictures, which, considering the ephemeral character of floral work, would be quite out of proportion to the results obtained. On the other hand the decorator has the advantage of having his materials presented to him half-made, as it were, - the flower, leaf, stem and plant is formed and he deals with it as he finds it. No material is given to the painter or musician in any ~~other~~^{such} combined form - every identical note must be combined and recombined into phrases and the phrases ~~combined~~ into the bigger composition. We might liken the flower with its foliage to the musical phrases of the musician. But in spite of these obstacles in its path floral decoration is undoubtedly tending in the right direction, and we may be optimistic in regard to its future development. An additional encouraging feature may be the fact that the subject is being considered important enough to include in the curriculum where floriculture is ~~being~~ taught, so that some of those who go into the

work may commence with the right fundamental principles which have been carefully worked out during comparatively recent years. But the rapidity with which the more artistic arrangements become general will depend to a considerable extent upon the open-mindedness of the individual and his desire for a true appreciation of Nature.

